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4. *Jisr el Khatueh*, said to be at 2 hours' distance above the preceding.

5. *Jisr el Burghuz*,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours further than the last.

6. *Jisr el Meshghara*.

7. *Jisr el Karaoun*. They say that at this bridge a considerable rivulet, *Neba el Feluj*, falls into the Kasmieh.

*Mr. Petermann's Note, containing Tabular Summary, &c.*

*Note*.—The following *Tabular Summary* I had compiled from published works on Palestine, to accompany a *Climatological* diagram, which has since appeared in the General Physical Map of Palestine in my 'Physical Atlas.' It only pretends to give the principal characteristic features of every month.

*Climatological History of the Months in Palestine.*

(Progress of the Seasons as indicated by that of Vegetation.)

*January*.—Country verdant with young corn; groves and meadows adorned with many flowers; almond-tree and peach-tree in blossom.

*February*.—In the lower and warmer parts orange-tree laden with ripe fruit.

*March*.—All trees in full leaf, many in bloom. In the lowlands, orange and lemon trees laden with fruit; palm-tree blossoms; barley begins to ripen.

*April*.—Oleander flowers, and white mulberry fruit ripens; barley harvest; wheat harvest begins in the valleys.

*May*.—Principal *harvest month*, especially of wheat; apricots and apples ripen. In the Jordan valley vegetation is withered and burnt up.

*June*.—Grapes begin to ripen; almonds ripe. (Beyrout honey of the Jordan valley collected in May, June, and July.)

*July*.—Various fruits: apples, pears, plums, dates, &c.; olives begin to ripen, grapes fully ripe; pumpkins.

*August*.—Principal *fruit month*, olives ripe.

*September*.—Commencement of vintage; harvest of the dourra and maize; cotton and pomegranate ripens.

*October*.—*Month of vintage*; gathering of cotton; ploughing and sowing commences; pistachio-nuts ripen.

*November*.—*Month of ploughing and sowing*; rice harvest; fig-trees, of which there are many varieties, laden with fruit.

*December*.—Trees lose their leaves; the brown and desolate plains and deserts become green pastures.

(The preceding table I sent to Col. von Wildenbruch, with the request to revise and correct it from his own personal observations. His reply is as follows:—)

... I hope that the following little table will be of some use to you for your *Climatological* researches. All this refers to *Beyruth* and the *sea coast*.

*January*.—The country green and blooming; heavy rains and storms (in Syria I never experienced rain without storms); anemones, narcissus, crocus, cyclamina flower; oranges begin to ripen, and orange, as well as citron and lemon trees, &c., cease to bloom, *i. e.*, they continue to bear blossoms, but *less* copiously, for in fact they never *cease* to blossom, except for two or three summer months. Snipes, ducks, plovers, storks, herons, cranes, and wild geese visit the plains; the woodcock moves to the north in the middle of the month: pink, geranium, and orange blossoms flourish in the plains throughout the year, as do the cyclamina in the mountains.

*February*.—Almond, peach-trees, and ficus indica in full bloom (the

almond-tree does not blossom in January, as you suppose). The above-named trees continue to blossom; oranges are ripe; storks, cranes, plovers, starlings, and green plovers assemble in great flights, and move northwards about the middle of the month; a few quails arrive from the south; partridges pair (middle of the month); heavy rains with storms. Towards the end of the month *khamzin*. (Simoom.)

*March*.—All is green. In the fields, wheat and barley come into ear; poppies, and a very beautiful pink-coloured flower, as well as a red sort of lily, blossom. The palm-tree and the vinegar-tree (Arab, *salsilakh*) are in bloom; the sugar-cane (growing wild), about 8 feet long, is being sold in the streets; quails arrive in great flights; rains with thunder-storms, *khamzin*.

*April*.—Pomegranate, rose, and vine blossom; oleander begins to bloom at the end of the month; quails begin to move N.W.; the landrail arrives; occasional rains; *khamzin*.

*May*.—In the valley of the Jordan, harvest in the beginning of the month; cucumbers ripe at this time; oleanders, malvæ, capers, blossom throughout the month. On the mountains rhododendrons (I have *only* seen *rhododendrons* at an elevation of at least 5000 feet) in great beauty; apricots, cherries (only at Damascus); plums are ripe. The silkworm changes into a chrysalis; the mulberry, of which the branches are cut off at this time, reproduces them 4 feet long in a month. Occasional and slight rains in the first half of the month; they then cease altogether, and until the middle of October no rain ever falls on the mountains. Young partridges at the end of the month; quails and crows disappear.

*June*.—Corn harvest in the beginning of the month; almonds, cucumbers, and some sorts of pumpkins are ripe; the *bee-eater* appears in flocks towards the end of the month.

*July*.—Apples, pears, and peaches ripen, but olives are not mature in this month, as you suppose; the dates are never fit to eat in Syria at this time, though they may be so at Alexandria. Towards the end of the month early grapes and Indian figs are ripe; at the same period corn harvest occurs on the high hills.

*August*.—Figs, grapes, water-melons ripen, also walnuts in the plain, and olives; partridges lay eggs towards the end of the month.

*September*.—Later grapes and figs of all sorts are ripe (at *Kurnayl*, 4100 Paris feet, there are fourteen different varieties). Harvest of dourra and maize. (I do not know the time when cotton is gathered, but I believe that since the reoccupation of Syria by the Turks, the cultivation of it has almost entirely ceased in this country.) The pomegranate ripens at the end of September, as well as the walnut in the high hills.

*October*.—Vintage on the hills; about the middle of the month the first storms with slight rains occur, in the hills generally eight days earlier than on the coast. Sometimes, however, these rains do not begin before November. Ploughing and other field preparations depend upon the quantity, as well as the period of the commencement, of these rains. Pomegranates are ripe, and the latest sorts of figs (*schittawi*) are gathered after the first rain; the quail begins to move S.W. towards the end of the month.

*November*.—Now ploughing and rice harvest take place. I have seen rice-fields in Syria only near the lake *Huleh*. Latest grapes in the hills. The quail migrates south; the mulberry loses its leaves towards the end of the month; orange and citron trees put forth rich bloom at this time; heavy rains and storms.

*December*.—The trees which are not evergreen lose their leaves; the country is verdant. Towards Christmas the first ripe oranges are seen; lemon-trees bear fruit throughout the entire year. (A *single* tree in my garden

yielded the whole supply for my household, which was very considerable; and yet, regardless of the great consumption which was made of it in the kitchen for sorbets, lemonade, &c., all wooden utensils, kitchen tables, &c., were cleaned with lemon acid.) Woodcocks arrive in the beginning, but snipes, storks, cranes, fieldfares, &c., not till the middle of December.

*Permanent Snow*.—In the Lebanon, except the Sannin, permanent snow lies only on the highest crest of the mountain range, at the beginning of *Wady Kadisheh* (the holy valley), above *Kanobin* and the cedars, north of the road which leads from *Bsharah* to *Ainata*, *Khan-el-Akmar*, and *Baalbek*. This highest crest is called *Makmil*. I estimated the summit of *Fum el Mezreb* (by the side of which there is a peak apparently of the same height, and from *Baalbek* both peaks appear as the highest of the Lebanon) at 9027·36 *Paris* feet, the Sannin being fixed at 8772·5 (hypsometer). On the western side the snow only lies in the chasms between the rocks, and it disappears as early as the end of May from the surface of the hills; but on the eastern side it continues to lie on the surface even during the summer months, especially when there has been a copious fall, though it is then seen alone in stripes of 15 or 20 square *ruthen*\* at the most. On the plateau of the Sannin it lies in the crevices and crater-like hollows in immense quantities, and forms a compact mass, which the inhabitants of the plains cut up with hatchets. Forty mules are employed in conveying this snow to *Beyruth* from May to November. On the top of *Jebel Sheikh* there is more snow than on the Lebanon; still, even there, although of course I did not ascend its summit, I did not see any continuous snow-fields. The transport of the snow from this mountain to Damascus requires 400 mules. On no other heights of the Lebanon, except those mentioned (two of the *Makmil* and the *Sannin*) does any snow remain, but in winter it continues on the ground at *Kurnayl* (4100 feet) sometimes for two or three days; at an elevation of 2000 feet, on the side next the sea, it never remains, even for a few hours. Indeed, during a residence of five years in Syria, I have only once seen snow at such an elevation (at *Beit Meri*, *Brumara*, &c. &c.). In the *Bukaah* the snow sometimes continues on the ground for some days. Last winter, as I learn by letters, it lasted for some weeks. The annals of the family *Shehab* mention that once (about one hundred years ago, as I have not got the book with me I cannot be exact) there had been deep snow at *Beyruth*.

Throughout Syria the date-palm (*Phoenix dactylifera*) only grows wild; it is nowhere cultivated as in Egypt, nor is it used in any way. The highest point in the Lebanon at which I found this tree is *Ain Anoub* (on the road from *Beyruth* to *Deir el Kammar*). I estimate the height of that village at 1500 to 1600 feet, but I have not measured it: this estimate, however, cannot be far from the truth, for *Shumlan*, which is above *Ain Anoub*, is 1874 feet. There are no palm-trees either at Damascus, Jerusalem, or in the *Bukaah*, nor have I ever found any other sort of palm than the date-tree. It is said that near *Ghassa* the date is in some degree eatable, but the banana (*Musa Paradisiaca*) thrives along the whole coast, and becomes very palatable, although not QUITE so good as the Egyptian. I cannot from memory fix the period when it ripens; this is occasioned by the circumstance that this fruit is cut off before it is mature, and hung up in the pantries, where it becomes ripe by degrees. We thus had *bananas* from autumn through the whole winter. The culture of the *vine* and of the *mulberry* tree extends beyond the villages which occupy the highest elevations in the Lebanon; so with regard to rye and corn—of course only on spots where they will grow.

The village *Hasroun*, 4966 feet high, from which I reached the *cedars* (the elevation at which they grow I found to be 5534·89 feet) after a march

\* Equal to about 150 to 200 acres.

of two and a half hours, offers the most magnificent appearance in respect of this sort of cultivation. Such is also the case at *Bsherreh*, which lies on the northern side of *Wady Kadisheh*, at the same elevation, and opposite to *Hasroun*.

I extract the following notes from a description of an excursion I made in 1843 across the northern Lebanon :—

	<i>Paris feet.</i>
<i>Shumlan</i> (starting point) . . . . .	1874
Pass over the crest to <i>Zahleh</i> . . . . .	4923
Natural bridge, source of <i>Nahr el Kelb</i> . . . . .	4622
Source of <i>Nahr Ibrahim</i> . . . . .	5604
<i>Hasroun</i> . . . . .	4966
Cedars . . . . .	5535
<i>Ainata</i> (on the declivity toward Baalbek) . . . . .	4656
<i>Baalbek</i> . . . . .	3332
Pass over the Lebanon, on the road from Beyruth to Damascus . . . . .	4550

These measurements were made with the barometer, and from corresponding observations taken at Beyruth. *All* the measurements by barometer gave a *smaller* result than those which I subsequently had occasion to make with the hypsometer of Ekling. This difference is very considerable with regard to the pass over the Lebanon between Beyruth and Damascus. The measurement by means of the hypsometer (though, it is true, under unfavourable circumstances) gave for this pass (*Mughissah*) 5013 feet. Which is right?

I subjoin my section of the country between Beyruth and Damascus. The number of the 'Annals' \* in which it is published contains, among others, the following remarks in this essay.

The heights were determined in 1846 by means of two hypsometers, which were constructed at Vienna by Ekling, under the direction of Professor Baumgärtner, and they had been made in accordance with directions given in the Introduction to Professor Gintes' work 'On Measuring Heights,' and expressed in *Paris feet*. One of these instruments was observed five times in the day by Mr. Blanche, tutor in the house of the French Consul-General at Beyruth.

*Khan Rouiessat el hamr* (khan of the red cupolas) was fixed barometrically in 1843 at 3616 feet; *Khan Murad*, at the same time, at 4000 feet. With regard to the highest point of the road across the Lebanon, I refer to my former observation. A violent and cold wind caused a continual vibration of the column of quicksilver in my thermometer. From the village *Medjel* to the mill at Barrada there is no inhabited place.

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## XVI.—*Notes on the Present State of the Geography of some Parts of Africa.* By JAMES MACQUEEN, Esq.

(Read April 8 and June 10, 1850.)

IN accordance with the desire of the President, I proceed to lay before the Society, as concisely as possible, a summary of the Geography of Central Africa, several degrees to the north and to the south of the equator towards the Indian Ocean. I shall commence with the lake to the N. of the tropic of Capricorn, and

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\* Monatsberichte der Gesellschaft für Erdkunde zu Berlin, Neue Folge, 4 Band, 1847.